

part. It is a curious illustration of Disraeli's brooding temperament that he should thus have recurred in fancy to the scenes he had visited two years before, leaving the impressions of his Italian journey for future use and record. Perhaps the romantic genius of the Rhine was more in harmony with the mood in which he now found himself. Ill-health and the many misfortunes of the last two years had given to his thoughts a melancholy bias; and it is not surprising then to find when we meet Vivian Grey again that he has become a Byronic exile who makes a luxury of the sorrow which he believes to be incurable. But energy is of the essence of the true Byronic manner, and there is an air of languor over these volumes that makes them ineffective. The sparkling and audacious hero whom we knew in the original novel has become tame and lifeless, and if there is less extravagance now we feel that the change is owing to loss of vigour by the author rather than to the growth of that conscious self-restraint which comes with maturing power. 'The springiness of my mind is gone,' cries Vivian Grey himself in the agony of remorse that follows the death of Cleveland; and as we read his subsequent adventures we cannot help feeling that the 'springiness' of his creator's mind is gone no less. Now and then we see flashes of the old epigrammatic spirit: — 'Though a great liar lie was a dull man'^j; 'Like all great travellers I have seen more than I remember and remember more than I have seen.'² Now and then we hear the welcome note of that subtle ironic laughter which Disraeli has always in store for his own most cherished affectations, and which goes so far to redeem them; as when he mocks at his Byronic enthusiasm: — 'The English youth . . . travel now, it appears, to look at mountains and catch cold in spouting trash on lakes by moonlight.'⁸ There are isolated episodes that show vigour and invention;

ⁱ Bk. VI., ch. 2. ^a Bk. VII. ch. 5. ⁸ Bk. V. ch. 8.